

I AM Navy Medicine

RSS : Posts Comments

NAVY MEDICINE LIVE

THE OFFICIAL BLOG OF U.S. NAVY AND MARINE CORPS HEALTH CARE • 2011 & 2012 WINNER OF BEST NAVY BLOG

HomeAboutDisclaimerNavy Medicine NewsNavy Medicine WebSiteI AM Navy Medicine

Written on FEBRUARY 25, 2013 AT 7:30 AM by VKREMER

Are you at risk for heart disease? The answer may surprise you...

Filed under CORPSMAN, FAMILIES, FLEET AND THE FLEET MARINE FORCE (NO COMMENTS)

By Ms. Dawn Whiting, [Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center](#)



Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Elizabeth Wixey checks Electronics Technician 1st Class Bruce Anderson's blood pressure during an annual health fair aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Farragut (DDG 99). (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class A.J. Jones/Released)

We all know that “lucky” person in our life ... the one who can eat whatever they want and not gain an ounce. Those of us who regularly eat healthy and exercise can only watch with envy as they seem to burn off the calories from their hamburger and fries, simply through the act of chewing. Similarly, we have all encountered the individual who states it does not matter if they eat fast food at every meal because they “PT like crazy,” and if you simply look at their weight and body composition, it seems to be true.

In reality, there is much more to the story than what we see on the outside. While we typically think of being overweight or obese as a leading indicator for heart disease risk, the latest studies are suggesting that body mass index, or BMI, may not be the best predictor of coronary artery disease (CAD) risk. Instead, waist-to-height ratio is being considered by some as the new leading screening tool for heart disease risk.¹ The ideal waist-to-height ratio is a waist circumference measuring less than half of your height in inches.²

Navy Medicine Video

Navy Medicine is a global healthcare network of 63,000 Navy medical personnel around the world who provide high quality health care to more than one million eligible beneficiaries. Navy Medicine personnel deploy with Sailors and Marines worldwide, providing critical mission support aboard ship, in the air, under the sea and on the battlefield.

Navy Medicine Social Media

Follow us on Twitter

Join us on Facebook

Read our publications

View our photo stream

Watch our videos

Navy Medicine Live Archives

[February 2015 \(14\)](#)

[January 2015 \(12\)](#)

[December 2014 \(17\)](#)

[November 2014 \(11\)](#)

What does this mean to you? In its simplest terms, it means that just because you are not overweight does not mean you are not at risk for heart disease. The good news is that waist-to-height measurements can indicate a risk earlier in life, which allows for better prevention efforts.

What can you do to reduce your risk?

The most significant risk factors for heart disease include age, hypertension (or high blood pressure), high cholesterol and obesity (with shape and fat distribution playing a key role). While there is not much we can do about our advancing age, we have some control over the remaining factors.

- **Know your numbers, such as blood pressure, LDLs, triglyceride and blood sugar levels.**
 - Most people with diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol do not have symptoms, so it is important to talk to your healthcare provider about where your numbers are compared to the ideal range. **Take an honest look at your health behavior choices – the good and the bad.**
 - Start with what you do well. For example, not smoking, exercising at least 150 minutes per week, or eating lots of fruits and vegetables. Why do you make these choices? Can any of those reasons also motivate you to make other healthy choices?
 - Examine the things you may not do as well such as eating foods high in saturated fat or consuming too much alcohol. If you determine a need for healthy changes in your life, start small.
 - Park in the last row of the parking lot to get in a little extra walking.
 - Try cutting back from six slices of bacon to three, making the switch to turkey bacon, or adding some whole wheat flour and blueberries to your pancake
- **Make it personal.**
 - Figure out what you enjoy doing. Maybe you hate to run but love sports. Find a local softball or volleyball league and see how you can get involved.
 - Understand what motivates you. Find short-term motivators such as increased performance on a fitness test, or being able to better keep up with your kids.

Take charge of your health

Heart disease is the number one killer of both men and women in America, but you have the power to reduce your risk! Taking action now can set up a lifetime of healthy habits that will protect your heart for years to come.

Organizations across the country are observing National Heart Health Month throughout February, making this month an ideal time to get more information on heart health and healthy living. Visit the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center [Health Promotion and Wellness](#) page or the [Military Health System's](#) website for more information.

1. [Ashwell M, Gunn P, Gibson S](#). Waist-to-height ratio is a better screening tool than waist circumference and BMI for adult cardiometabolic risk factors: systematic review and meta-analysis. *Obes Rev*. 2012 Mar;13(3):275-86. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22106927>. Accessed January 30, 2013.

October 2014 (15)
September 2014 (20)
August 2014 (14)
July 2014 (13)
June 2014 (8)
May 2014 (11)
April 2014 (9)
March 2014 (14)
February 2014 (7)
January 2014 (7)
December 2013 (7)
November 2013 (12)
October 2013 (7)
September 2013 (14)
August 2013 (13)
July 2013 (11)
June 2013 (22)
May 2013 (15)
April 2013 (14)
March 2013 (14)
February 2013 (14)
January 2013 (12)
December 2012 (11)
November 2012 (11)
October 2012 (7)
September 2012 (9)
August 2012 (12)
July 2012 (13)
June 2012 (17)
May 2012 (22)
April 2012 (14)
March 2012 (13)
February 2012 (14)
January 2012 (13)
December 2011 (13)
November 2011 (20)
October 2011 (22)
September 2011 (12)
August 2011 (16)

2. Ashwell, M. Obesity risk: importance of the waist-to-height ratio. *Nursing Standard*. 2009;23(41):49-54. <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=10&sid=87ac7d4a-45f8-4241-ab9f-8c51e44a691f%40sessionmgr12&hid=9&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhtbG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=c8h&AN=2010320120>. Accessed January 31, 2013.

← Next post

Previous post →

vkremer tagged this post with: [health](#), [Healthy Eating](#), [hearty health month](#), [medical](#), [military](#), [Navy](#), [Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center](#), [Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery](#), [Navy Medicine](#), [Public Health](#), [wellness](#)

Read 221 articles by [vkremer](#)

